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The Arms of Canada



Third Edition

1930

DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
OF CANADA





Heralds College
London.
24th January 1923.

Edmund Lee
Henry King of Arms

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The Arms of Canada



Third Edition

1930

DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
OF CANADA

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BY Order of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, dated the 26th of March, 1919, a Committee was appointed for the purpose of enquiring into and reporting upon the advisability of requesting His Majesty the King to assign Armorial Bearings to Canada, the said Committee to consist of the Under-Secretary of State, the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Dominion Archivist and the Chief of the General Staff.

The Committee met on the 3rd of April, 1919, with the following in attendance:

Thomas Mulvey, K.C., Under-Secretary of State, Chairman;
Sir Joseph Pope, K.C.M.G., C.V.O., I.S.O., Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs;
A. G. Doughty, C.M.G., Lit.D., Dominion Archivist;
Major-General W. G. Gwatkin, C.B., C.M.G., Department of Militia and Defence.

On the 20th of April, 1921, the Committee submitted to His Excellency the Governor-General in Council the device which was subsequently approved by Royal Proclamation on the 21st of November, 1921.

The Committee desires to express its acknowledgments to Colonel C. F. Hamilton, for assistance in drafting the accompanying Memorandum.

BY THE KING

A PROCLAMATION

Declaring His Majesty's Pleasure concerning the Ensigns Armorial of the Dominion of Canada


GEORGE R.I.

WHEREAS We have received a request from the Governor-General in Council of Our Dominion of Canada that the Arms or Ensigns Armorial hereinafter described should be assigned to Our said Dominion.

We do hereby, by and with the advice of Our Privy Council, and in exercise of the powers conferred by the first Article of the Union with Ireland Act, 1800, appoint and declare that the Arms or Ensigns Armorial of the Dominion of Canada shall be Tierced in fesse the first and second divisions containing the quarterly coat following, namely, 1st Gules three lions passant guardant in pale or, 2nd, Or a lion rampant within a double tressure flory-counter-flory gules, 3rd, Azure a harp or stringed argent, 4th, Azure three fleurs-de-lis, or, and the third division Argent three maple leaves conjoined on one stem proper. And upon a Royal helmet mantled argent doubled gules the Crest, that is to say, On a wreath of the colours argent and gules a lion passant guardant or imperially crowned proper and holding in the dexter paw a maple leaf gules. And for Supporters On the dexter a lion rampant or holding a lance argent, point or, flying therefrom to the dexter the Union Flag, and on the sinister A unicorn argent armed crined and unguled or, gorged with a coronet composed of crosses-patée and fleurs-de-lis a chain affixed thereto reflexed of the last, and holding a like lance flying therefrom to the sinister a banner azure charged with three fleurs-de-lis or; the whole ensigned with the Imperial Crown proper and below the shield upon a wreath composed of roses thistles, shamrocks and lillies a scroll azure inscribed with the motto—*A mari usque ad mare*, and Our Will and Pleasure further is that the Arms or Ensigns Armorial aforesaid shall be used henceforth, as far as conveniently may be, on all occasions wherein the said Arms or Ensigns Armorial of the Dominion of Canada ought to be used.

Given at Our Court at Buckingham Palace, this twenty-first day of November, in the year of Our Lord One thousand nine hundred and twenty-one, and in the twelfth year of Our Reign.

GOD SAVE THE KING



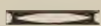
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MEMORANDUM

REGARDING

The Arms of Canada



ARMORIAL bearings came into use as a means of identification. They were important in time of peace and, in time of war, often a matter of life and death. Until recent times, as history is reckoned, few men could read; nor had our ancestors the advantage of newspaper portraits, moving pictures, and the thousand other ways we now possess of recognizing and identifying people. Heraldry may be described as a form of picture-writing, worked out in the Middle Ages to afford a means of recognition. In those days, people had fine artistic perceptions—finer perhaps than have we, their descendants; they liked bright colours and had excellent taste in using them. The result was a system of heraldry not only ingenious and practical, but beautiful.

Despite printing, photography, and other modern inventions, we still make use of emblems, badges

and symbols. The maple leaf at once suggests Canada; the thistle, Scotland; the rose, England; the shamrock, Ireland; the leek, Wales; the lily, France; and each is used as an emblem. The people of the Middle Ages, orderly in some respects reduced to a system this method of appealing to the eye. The coat of arms is the most elaborate form of the system; in it, indeed, the system became a science. It is curious to note that no country abandons the practice of using armorial bearings; and we may conclude that emblems and symbols are necessary to preserve traditions and inspire love of country. Of these symbols, the coat of arms and the flag are the chief; and while the flag is the more frequently used, the coat of arms is the older—often the foundation of the flag.

The use of coat-armour began in a thoroughly practical manner. Uniforms were unknown and would have been too expensive in early times; soldiers therefore carried banners bearing the emblems of their chiefs, and every man of importance on going into battle, when the visor of his helmet would be down, took care to have his armorial bearings—his identification mark—clearly painted on his shield. When he travelled on peaceful occasions, he had it embroidered on his coat; he had it carved on the front of his house and, when lodged at an inn, he would announce that he was staying there by hanging up his shield outside. Young people of social position, though seldom taught to read or write, were carefully trained in armoury; and

when a competitor, for example, found himself in a town the day before a tournament began, he could tell in a moment who were there by glancing at the shields which their owners had displayed.

Beginning with a simple use of badges and devices, heraldry developed into a science which did more than merely identify a man: it contrived to make known in a small space a surprising amount of information about his social position and family history. From his coat of arms it might be possible to tell that his father was still alive—that he was a younger son—that he was married—that he was descended from this or that family other than his own—that he belonged to a younger branch of his family, and so forth. For example, the arms of the Prince of Wales are the Royal Arms with certain marks upon them which indicate that he is an eldest son whose father is still living; while the arms of the Duke of Connaught are the Royal Arms with certain other marks which show him to be a younger son of a Sovereign. Cadency—meaning descent from a junior branch of a family—is shown by what are called “differences”; while “quarterings” indicate a right to bear the arms of more families than one.

This matter of quarterings and differences is important enough to warrant a little attention. A coat of arms is a sort of heirloom, shared by the several members of a family. To take an imaginary case, we may

suppose that early in the Middle Ages some man assumed or was granted arms. These might be very simple, say a gold band slanting across a blue field. Each eldest son, on succeeding to the leadership of the family, would inherit the right to that simple device; and, supposing the family to have continued in unbroken line to the present day, the arms would still retain the original simple form, unless meanwhile through marriage the arms of other families had been incorporated. But the younger sons of the founder would use their father's arms with modifications, such as some object in the field or on the band, or as a border about the shield, this being a "difference". As each younger son set up a branch of the family, the process would begin again, the eldest sons inheriting the simpler form, the younger sons adding further differences.

The right to use coat-armour descended to daughters as well as to sons; and it often happened that men married wives who, like themselves, were "armigerous", that is to say, entitled to arms. This led to "quartering". Originally, in such a case, two shields would be used; this being found inconvenient, the arms were halved or, in the technical language of heraldry, "impaled"—in other words, the husband's own arms occupied the right, and his wife's arms the left half of his shield. And if the wife was, in a heraldic sense, an heiress—that is to say, if she had no brother—her children would quarter her arms: they would divide the family shield into four, placing their

farther's arms and their mother's arms in alternate quarters. Subsequent marriages might lead to fresh quarterings, and a family of considerable antiquity may thus embody in its arms a number of coats, each indicative of marriage and descent.

A knowledge of these technical processes is necessary to the understanding of the Arms of Canada.

The Royal Arms are what are termed in heraldry "arms of dominion." They are the personal arms of the King, and yet they are his personal arms because he is King. For example, Henry VII was a Tudor and, as head of that family, might have used the Tudor arms; but he did not use them, nor did he incorporate them in the Royal Arms. Family has succeeded family on the throne, but changes made in the arms have had regard to the countries ruled, not to reigning families.

The Arms of England are a red shield with three golden lions. Edward III claimed the crown of France, and asserted his right by assuming, and quartering, the Arms of France—a blue shield with golden fleurs-de-lis; from that time onward the Kings of England bore as their arms a shield divided into four, with the Arms of France in the first and fourth and those of England in the second and third divisions, France occupying the place of honour by right of seniority. In this form the arms continued until the time of the Stuarts. James I was reigning King of Scotland, and as such bore the Arms of Scotland

—a golden shield with a red lion, enclosed in what is called a “double tressure,” a sort of border of two thin lines; he added the Arms of Scotland to those of England and France; he added also the Arms of Ireland—a blue field with a golden harp. When George I ascended the throne, he added the Arms of Hanover; and then the Royal Arms were those of England, Scotland, Ireland, France and Hanover, in combination. Thus when Canada first formed part of the British Empire, her new King bore the fleur-de-lis. In 1803 George III dropped the Arms of France, and Queen Victoria on her accession dropped those of Hanover, as she did not succeed to that throne. Thus the Royal Arms—as displayed on the Royal Standard—assumed the form with which we are familiar—a combination of the Arms of England, of Scotland and of Ireland.

There remain to be considered certain accessories to the coat of arms, such as the crest, the supporters and the motto. Originally, the crest was a device placed on top of a knight's helmet, to help to distinguish him when the visor was down. Persons of a certain rank were allowed to have their shield flanked by representations of human beings, or animals, these being termed “supporters.” There is no need to describe what a motto is. In addition to these main components, custom has sanctioned the use of certain embellishments. The crest is often placed on a helmet, which latter is displayed in different positions for persons of different ranks. When an elaborate decoration is desired, the helmet is

draped in what is termed "mantling"—a survival of the lambrequin or cloth which covered the helmet as a protection against rain and sun; and as this cloth was liable to be cut and slashed in battle, the folds of the mantling are represented with deeply indented edges. Occasionally, other ornaments are used, such as a display of symbolic flowers between the shield and the scroll upon which the motto is inscribed. These are but matters of personal fancy: they are not part of the "achievement of arms," as the combination of arms, crest, supporters and motto is sometimes termed.

Returning to history, the crest of the Kings of England was a lion "statant guardant"—it stood with its head turned full to the left, facing outwards; the English supporters also were lions, one on each side of the shield; and there were two mottoes: the one on a garter—"Honi soit qui mal y pense" ("Dishonoured be he who thinks ill of it"); the other a battle-cry—"Dieu et mon Droit" ("God and my Right"). The crest of Scotland is a lion sitting up, facing the spectator, a dagger in one paw and a sceptre in the other; the supporters were two unicorns, one on each side of the shield, each carrying a banner; and there are two mottoes—"Nemo me impune lacessit" ("No one harms me with impunity"), and "In Defens". King James VI of Scotland, on becoming James I of England, took for supporters one lion and one unicorn. Since then, as the old nursery rhyme reminds us, the lion and the unicorn have confronted one another.

At this point an interesting fact may be mentioned. In England the Royal Arms are so arranged as to exhibit England as the senior partner; the English crest and mottoes are used instead of the Scottish; the lion supporter is put on the right of the shield, the unicorn on the left; the banners disappear, and the English arms displayed in the first quarter, are repeated in the fourth, the Scottish arms being in the second and the Irish in the third. But in Scotland the Royal Arms are arranged differently, the attitude of the Scots being that His Majesty the King of Scotland happens to reign over other realms as well. The crest and mottoes are those of Scotland; the unicorn is on the right, the lion on the left of the shield; and, within the shield, Scotland takes the first and fourth quarters, England the second and Ireland the third. So, in England the King has one achievement of arms, and in Scotland he has another. This fact has a direct bearing on our problem in Canada.

Until recently, questions relating to the Arms of Canada had not received the attention they deserved. His Majesty is King of Canada as well as of his other dominions; and in Canada the Royal Arms, in their English form, have always been freely used. Soon after Confederation a Great Seal was required, and a design was approved by a Royal Warrant dated 26 May, 1868. This design displayed, quarterly, the arms of the four confederated provinces—Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick; it was not used for the Great Seal, but it was gradually adopted as

the Arms of Canada. From time to time other provinces joined the Confederation, and it became a common practice to add their arms to the original design, with the final result that it was not unusual to see, jumbled together on one shield, the arms of the nine provinces. It had long been felt that this was open to objection; and a Committee, appointed to submit proposals, recommended the adoption of a coat of arms which has since been approved by the Government of Canada and authorized by His Majesty the King.

Before describing the arms, one more remark remains to be made. Countries sometimes have national flags denoting not kingship but race. The English, for example, from the time of the second Crusade, bore as their banner the Cross of St. George—red on a white ground; while the banner of the Scots was the Cross of St. Andrew—a white saltire on a blue ground. These two banners were combined in 1707, when the Kingdoms of England and Scotland were united; in 1801, the Cross of St. Patrick was added—a red saltire on a white ground; and thus the Union Jack became the national flag as distinguished from the Royal Standard.

Turning again to the Arms of Canada, three facts are worthy of attention. First, that Canadians stand to their King in as close a relation as do any of his subjects elsewhere; secondly, that Canada, an integral part of the British Empire, emerged from the Great War a member

of the League of Nations; lastly, that Canada having been founded by men of four different races—French, English, Scottish and Irish—Canadians inherit the language, laws, literature and traditions—also the arms—of all four mother countries. To these three ideas expression is given in the achievement of arms which it has been His Majesty's pleasure to authorize Canada to bear.

Ensigned with—that is to say, surmounted by—the Imperial Crown, the achievement is as follows:

On the shield, on the upper two-thirds of it, are displayed the Royal Arms, differenced by what once were the Arms of France being shown in the fourth quarter; and on the lower third, silver or white, a green three-leaved sprig of maple, the emblem of Canada.

The crest is a lion, in its right paw a red maple leaf, which latter, during the Great War, came to be used as a symbol of sacrifice.

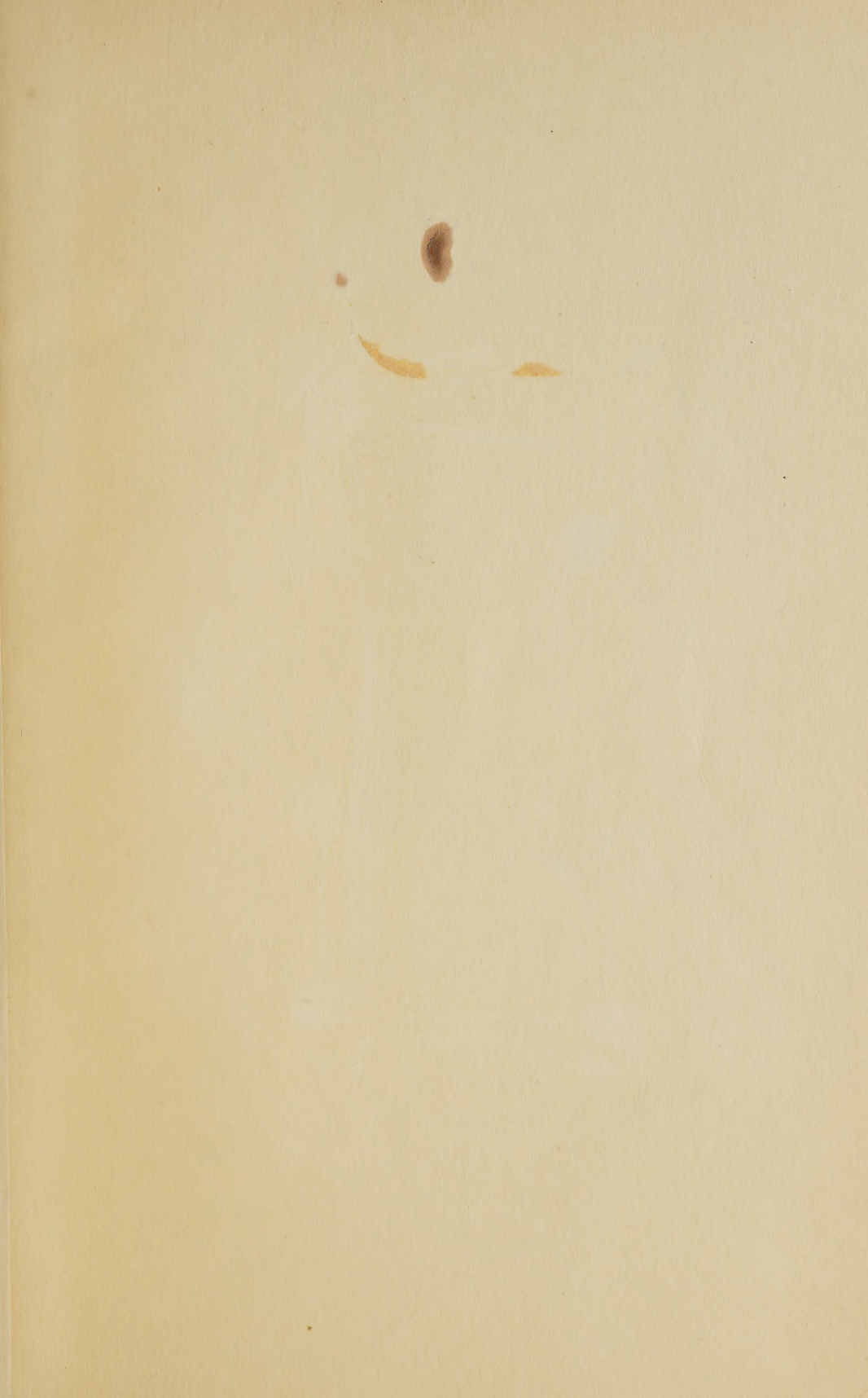
The supporters are, with some slight distinctions, the lion and unicorn of the Royal Arms. The lion holds the Union Jack; the unicorn, the ancient banner of France.

The motto is new—“*A mari usque ad mare*”, “From sea to sea”, alluding to the fact that the Dominion of Canada stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It is taken from the Latin version of Psalm 72:8—“*Et dominabitur a mari*

usque ad mare, et a flumine usque ad terminos orbis terrarum." In the Authorized Version the quotation reads: "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."



OTTAWA
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Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty
1930



Canada - Heraldry



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